



Community Indicators Initiative Report

July 2005

Introduction

In these days of scarce resources and community activism, information-based decision-making is becoming a crucial component of program management for governments and community-based organizations alike. Across the country, indicators have become a popular tool for tracking trends and measuring outcomes. Grantors and government budget offices rely on data in order to allocate resources in a way that best meets the community's needs. Access to a centralized pool of data greatly eases research efforts for grant writers. Communities use indicators to benchmark themselves against other similar communities. Civic activists use indicator data to analyze trends and advocate for change in topics ranging from environmental health to neighborhood revitalization.

“Democratization of Data” is the core concept at the heart of all these projects. Knowledge is power. As objective data are more easily accessible, civic dialogue becomes better informed, community members are increasingly engaged in decision-making processes, and governments and organizations are held more

accountable to their constituents. Communities that work together to define their goals and priorities find that indicators provide an extremely useful roadmap for assessing whether or not the path they are on will lead them to their desired destinations.



Over the last few years, a range of players in the Spokane region have become increasingly interested in using indicators for their various purposes. Both the Spokane Regional Health District and Spokane County United Way are active gatherers and disseminators of data related to their key initiatives. This information is also used by community groups with similar interests. For years, the Journal of Business has published the Market Fact Book that surveys a wide range of data on the Spokane Metropolitan Area. Most recently, the Economic Development Council has refined an extensive list of economic trend data that they intend to track. And the City of Spokane's recent adoption of the Priorities of Government model relies on indicators to guide budget decisions. However, two challenges remain. Often a researcher believes that data are available but is unable to identify the source. Also, static reports do not allow for data retrieval so that individual groups can perform their own analyses.

For these reasons, the Community Indicators Initiative formed over a year ago under the leadership of Patrick Jones, Director of EWU's Institute for Public Policy & Economic Analysis. The goals of the project are consistent with EWU's desire to actively engage university resources in service to the community, and promises to provide a valuable resource that will reduce duplication of efforts and enrich public policy decisions in the future.

The Community Indicator Initiative (CII) in Spokane County consists of a core group of members. The CII members represent a broad range of interests including economics, public health, environmental issues, urban development, social services, community engagement, and access to community services. Members come

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Purpose of the system:

- ❖ Collect, analyze and share a broad spectrum of information to support informed decision-making by individual community members, policy makers, non-governmental groups and organizations, business and others, thereby democratizing information to the citizens of Spokane County;
- ❖ Identify community trends to enable the community to prioritize issues and need areas for effective resource allocation;
- ❖ Maintain a data storage capacity accessible to any individual or group within the community, and others who wish to learn about Spokane and the surrounding region; and
- ❖ Measure progress over time of various efforts toward a healthy, vibrant community and enable groups to compare Spokane to other communities with similar characteristics.

from a variety of organizations including Eastern Washington University, Spokane Regional Health District, City of Spokane, Spokane County United Way, Community-Minded Enterprises (formerly Health Improvement Partnership), The Lands Council, and New Priorities Foundation. The Spokane Economic Development Council and the local office of the State of Washington Employment Security Department provided occasional consultation.

Participants of the Community Indicators project wish to support efforts contributing toward a healthy, vibrant community for Spokane County, through the development, maintenance, and dissemination of a community indicators system.

Methodology

Potential community indicators for this initiative were selected through several methods. First, there are many other communities nationally that currently have indicator projects underway. These communities were evaluated on the basis of their overall list of indicators, grouping selections, presentation and accessibility of the data, and the community use of the information. Nine of these communities were selected to draw potential indicators from, including Boston, Jacksonville, Phoenix, Tucson, Baltimore, Washington D.C., Reno, Santa Monica, and Philadelphia. See text box to the right.

Additional indicators were gathered from a variety of sources. Several organizations currently track community information related to a specific topic. Some of this information was added to the list of potential indicators. Other potential indicators were developed from CII members' discussions and research.

Initially, the list of potential indicators was divided into seven categories: environment and natural resources; economic vitality;

health; public safety; art, culture, and leisure; housing and transportation; and education. The need for an additional group, social capital, became apparent during the community evaluation of the indicators.

Eight focus groups were held, one for each category, consisting of community partners interested in the topic. Participants were both data users and data producers. They were identified via contacts of the CII core group members and by community resources. Invitation letters to participate were mailed and followed by a telephone call from a CII member. The initial letter explained the project and why they were asked to participate. Phone calls ensured receipt of the letter and answered questions. The follow-up phone calls proved essential for good focus group participation. The focus groups occurred between September and December 2004, from noon until 1:30 p.m.. The Spokane Intercollegiate

In most cases, a website provides the community with access to a central data warehouse, in addition to analysis and reports on indicators of interest to the community. Going on twenty years, Jacksonville is home to perhaps the nation's most long-standing indicators initiative, www.jcci.org/default.aspx. Boston's indicators project, www.tbf.org/indicators/, operates in partnership with their metropolitan planning organization and a local foundation. United Way is one of the key partners in the Greater New Orleans Community Data Center, www.gnocdc.org/. Universities also often serve as key partners, as is the case with the Morrison Institute at Arizona State University's School of Public Affairs, www.asu.edu/copp/morrison/public/qofl99.htm.

Nationally, indicator professionals trade tips on a list serve hosted by the Urban Institute's National Neighborhood Indicators Partnership, www.urban.org/nnip/index.htm. Most recently, a Community Indicators Consortium has formed to provide a central store of information on indicators initiatives nationally and around the world, www.communityindicators.net/.

Research and Technology Institute (SIRTI), a state agency with a building centrally located in the city, provided a conference room in which to hold the focus groups. Lunch was provided for the participants.

Focus Group Format

Four distinct parts comprised the focus group agenda for the initially defined seven categories. First was an introduction to the project that included how the CII formed and the purpose of the initiative. Next, a general brainstorming session took place around what people thought created a healthy, vibrant community. This was unrestricted to the focus group topical area. Rather, the CII members wanted to get a general sense of what community members thought were important characteristics for a healthy, vibrant community.

The third section of the focus group took the most time and was centered on the focus group topic. Potential indicators for that topic identified through the research of CII members were displayed on large sheets of paper hanging on the wall. The indicators were grouped into subcategories so there were approximately 12 indicators on each sheet. The sessions usually began with a minimum of 50 possible indicators.

Participants were asked to review the indicators and identify any necessary revisions, additions or deletions. Each focus group contributed several appropriate indicators that previously were not included, and identified several extraneous ones. Participants were then asked to vote on which indicators they felt were the most useful and provided a good range of that topic area. Voting occurred by having participants place stickers next to the indicators chosen. They were allowed three votes per sheet and only one vote per indicator. This method was used to provide a broad representation of important issues in the general category.

The last portion of the focus group was a brief discussion about presentation of the data. A major CII goal is to provide easily accessible leading indicators on a web site. Participants were asked what website features or data presentations they would find useful and the geographic detail desired.

The eighth focus group consisted of local, state, and federal elected officials (or their staff members) as well as civic discourse leaders. It proceeded in a different format from the other focus groups. An initial overview of the project was again presented, but with more emphasis on use of indicators to aid policy decisions.

Then, there was a live demonstration of two functional community indicator web sites from other communities. This allowed participants a glimpse of where the CII project is headed. Participants were asked to identify what features they found useful, missing elements, and other issues or concerns with providing community data on a web site.

Results from the previous seven focus groups were then presented. This included a summary of topics that emerged from the brainstorming sessions and the ten indicators that received the most votes from each focus group. Participants in this last group provided comments on these

items, which included indicators or topics they felt were missing. For the most part, these 'missing' indicators had been on the larger list of indicators the topical area focus group voted on, but did not make it into the top ten. From the previous focus groups, it became apparent that social capital and community member interactions were important issues. CII members created a list of social capital indicators, using the same methodology as other categories, which were

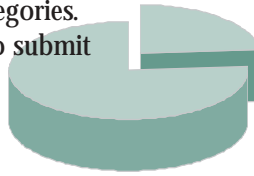
presented to the last focus group. Again, comments as to indicators or issues they felt were missing were solicited. This group did not vote on the list of social capital indicators.

At the conclusion of each focus group, a follow-up questionnaire was provided. Participants indicated other topical areas they would like to receive information on and if they would like to receive further information about this project.

A handful of prospective participants were very interested, but were unable to attend the focus groups due to scheduling conflicts. Those few individuals were sent the list of indicators for the category they were invited to attend and allowed to vote. They voted using the same restrictions as other focus group participants. These votes were included in the final tabulation.



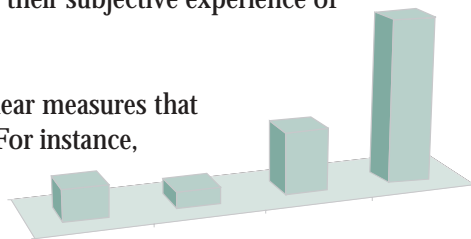
All participants were sent the final list of indicators with the number of votes received for the focus group category they attended. Individuals expressing an interest in categories other than the one they attended on the follow-up questionnaire were also sent the final list of indicators for those additional categories. Those receiving additional category lists were asked to submit comments and any known data sources to the CII.



Guidelines

The final selection of initial indicators to be included on the CII web site will be filtered through a set of guidelines created by CII members. These guidelines will aid in identifying the most meaningful information for the community. They are:

- 1- **Importance:** At least initially, selected indicators will measure aspects of the community's quality of life that are considered relevant and important by a broad base of interest groups within the community. Later, the set of indicators may be expanded to include those of interest only to focused sectors in the community.
- 2- **Responsive to trends:** Indicators will be selected based on their ability to respond relatively quickly and noticeably to real changes in the quality of life, as revealed by changes in the direction or slope of the indicator's trend line.
- 3- **Predictive (outcome-oriented):** Where possible, indicators will measure a community outcome – the actual condition of the quality of life (e.g., the crime rate). Alternatively, it will measure an outcome of the community's response to a quality-of-life issue (e.g., police response time) rather than the input of the response itself (e.g., number of police officers).
- 4- **Asset-based (vs. liabilities):** Where possible, indicators will measure positive aspects of the community's quality of life (the community's assets rather than its liabilities) so that an increase in the indicator's trend line reveals community improvement (e.g., the high-school graduation rate rather than the dropout rate).
- 5- **Valid and understandable:** The indicators must be scientific, research-based, valid, reliable, and easily understandable measures. In addition to statistical validity, another measure of whether the correct indicator is being tracked is whether the community agrees that movement of a trend line is consistent with their subjective experience of that factor.
- 6- **Clarity:** Indicators will use clear measures that filter out extraneous factors. For instance, dollar indicators will be reported in deflated,



constant dollars; per-person rates will be used where appropriate to factor out population growth; and raw numbers will be used where total magnitudes are important.

- 7- **Benchmarkable:** When possible, indicators should link to and be consistent with local, state, and national measures so that benchmark comparisons may be made with similar jurisdictions and geographic regions like the state and nation.
- 8- **Policy Relevance:** Selected indicators should be measures that are susceptible to positive change over time through public decision-making and policies at the community level. Thus, indicators should anticipate future quality-of-life conditions rather than reacting to past trends. For example, a "leading" indicator (e.g., cigarettes sold) is more useful than a "lagging" indicator (e.g., lung-cancer deaths) because it allows for a proactive community response.
- 9- **Geographic Scope:** Initially, the geographic scope of the data will be confined to Spokane County. Finer grain data, such as at the neighborhood or sub-neighborhood level, will be used whenever available.
- 10- **"Perception" data can be included:** It is recognized that subjective data measuring personal experience, insight, or perception can be equally as valid and informative as objective data, depending on how it is collected.
- 11- **Availability, timeliness, reliability:** Data for the indicator should be readily available and affordably accessible, at annual frequency or less, from a credible public or private source. If the data come from multiple sources, it should be possible to readily compile and calculate the indicator numbers. Data should be consistently collected, compiled, and calculated in the same way each time. In order to accurately measure trends, data should be updated at least every two years. Point-in-time data is not as informative regarding trends.

Focus group participants provided valuable insight into what indicators they considered most important to the community on a wide variety of topics. They also gave constructive feedback on whether potential indicators were valid and understandable, and commented at what geographic level they would like data. It was clear from the focus groups that *perception* data was desirable. Data source research by CII members will provide information regarding the availability, timeliness, and reliability of the indicators. CII members will combine the information currently gathered with the remaining guidelines to identify what indicators will initially be included on the web site. Additional indicators can be added at a later time as data availability, time, and resources allow.

Results

Participation

Focus groups were well attended and provided a broad cross-section of community interests. There were between 15 and 30 participants at each of the eight focus groups. Participation represented between 60% and 85% of invitees for each focus group. A list of agencies that were represented by focus group topical area is presented in Appendix A.

What makes a healthy, vibrant community?

When focus group participants were asked what they felt were important factors for a healthy, vibrant community, responses spanned nine broad categories. In order of the number of times mentioned, those categories were social capital; economic vitality; art, culture, and leisure; community infrastructure and built environment; environment and natural resources; housing and transportation; health; public safety; and education. Table 1 contains the specific items mentioned for each category and the number of times it was mentioned.

Table 1.

Focus Group Responses for What Constitutes a Healthy, Vibrant Community

	# times		# times
ART, CULTURE, LEISURE	20	HEALTH	10
Abundance of and access to quality parks and open space	5	Access to health care	3
Thriving arts community	5	Low rates of child abuse	2
Cultural diversity	5	Access to food	1
Recreational opportunities	2	Good medical system	1
Number and size of community events	2	Physical health	1
Good trail system close to downtown	1	Mental health and drug treatment programs	1
COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE/ BUILT ENVIRONMENT	16	Perpetrator treatment for domestic violence	1
Strong infrastructure (police, fire, streets, etc)	5		
Welcoming community	2	HOUSING AND TRANSPORTATION	11
Locally available resources – bioregionalism	1	Access to public transportation/ good transit	4
Long term city planning	1	Affordable housing	4
Services for the aging population	1	Good air transportation	2
Pedestrian accessible shopping	1	Lack of traffic congestion	1
Preservation and adaptation of historic buildings	1		
Community defined as a destination location	1	PUBLIC SAFETY	9
Demographic diversity	1	Pedestrian friendly	2
Number and types of community organizations	1	Safe and healthy neighborhoods	2
Neighborhood identity	1	Low crime rate	2
		Student safety	1
ECONOMIC VITALITY	23	Swift criminal adjudication	1
Living wages (family wage jobs)	4	Perception of public safety	1
Low poverty	4		
Low unemployment/ strong employment	4	SOCIAL CAPITAL	24
Strong economy	3	High level of civic engagement	9
Vibrant downtown core	3	Opportunities for youth	3
Entrepreneurial opportunities	1	Trust in government	2
High paying employment	1	Collaborative government	2
Diversified economy	1	Viable avenues for public discourse	1
Reasonable cost of living	1	Sense of possibility	1
Young adult retention	1	Strong voter support for initiatives	1
		Diversity of leadership	1
EDUCATION	8	Progressive leadership	1
Good schools at all levels	4	Religious freedom	1
Inter-discipline communication – higher ed	2	NGO role in community	1
Educational opportunity	1	Measure community opportunity to affect change	1
Trained work force	1		
ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES	15		
Clean air	3		
Clean water	3		
Ecological integrity/sustainability	2		
Cleanliness of community and zero graffiti	2		
Compact development	2		
Energy self sufficiency	1		
Sufficient water supply	1		
Freedom from involuntary exposure to toxins	1		

Topical Areas

Seven topical focus groups were presented a list of indicators and asked to identify any they felt were missing. The following information lists the starting number of indicators, the number added by focus group participants, and the percent of the total number of indicators that were added by the focus group. A complete list of indicators by topic is presented in Appendix B. Table 2 captures the initial and added indicators by group.

Via voting, focus group participants identified indicators they felt were the most important. To keep the initial version of the database manageable, CII core members decided to research and present the top 20 of these indicators. Some topical categories contain slightly more than 20 since several indicators received the same number of votes. All indicators with the same number of votes as the number 20 indicator were included. Table 3 evaluates the share of these top indicators added by focus group participants. Inclusion of focus group added indicators varied from 5% to 38%.

The top 20 indicators for each topical category are those that will likely be made available on a website, assuming the information is available and meets the guidelines. A comprehensive search by CII members for data sources at the community level on these leading indicators is ongoing. The list of top indicators picked by each focus group is presented in Table 4. They are ranked in descending order.

Table 2.
Initially Proposed Indicators and Suggested Additions by Topical Area

	Starting No.	Added No.	% Added
Art/Culture/Leisure	36	27	42.9
Economic vitality	68	13	16.0
Education	62	32	34.0
Environment and natural resources	59	19	24.4
Health	67	25	27.2
Housing and transportation	54	22	28.9
Public safety	41	34	45.3

Table 3.
Top Indicators Added by the Focus Group Process

	Starting No.	Added No.	% Added
Art/Culture/Leisure	22	9	29.0
Economic vitality	20	5	20.0
Education	20	3	13.0
Environment and natural resources	21	1	4.5
Health	26	10	27.8
Housing and transportation	21	8	27.6
Public safety	20	12	37.5

Table 4.
Top Indicators Chosen by Focus Group Participants

Arts, Culture, and Leisure

- ❖ Designated city/county funding for the arts
- ❖ Participation in team or individual sports/recreation
- ❖ Proximity to natural recreation opportunities
- ❖ Amount of time people can spend on leisure/arts/culture (discretionary time)
- ❖ Funding for public parks (by municipality: city, county, state)
- ❖ Attendance at art and cultural events per 1,000 people
- ❖ Private support per person for the arts
- ❖ Visitor expenditures (visitors to local events or attractions); impact on tax base; jobs created
- ❖ Facilities' available seats-to-population ratio for sports events/size of venues
- ❖ Number of miles of bike trails and quality (local/regional; gravel, graded, paved)
- ❖ Museum attendance per 1,000 people (by museum, within Spokane County)
- ❖ Per capita attendance at sporting events per 1,000 people
- ❖ Number of people traveling to Spokane (visitors) for local events or attractions (to attend, participate in, etc.)
- ❖ Acreage of golf-courses per 1,000 people/rounds of golf and price (cost)
- ❖ Number of arts-related businesses
- ❖ Number of county and city festivals and celebrations annually
- ❖ Attendance at musical shows per 1,000 people
- ❖ Non-automotive travel
- ❖ Recreation expenditures per person for activities and maintenance
- ❖ Cultural events by racial and ethnic communities
- ❖ Number of ski mountains/cost index
- ❖ Acreage of parks per 1,000 people



Table 4. Continued**Economic Vitality**

- ❖ Technology jobs per 1,000 population
- ❖ Average annual wage by sector
- ❖ Cost of living
- ❖ New housing starts or total new home sales
- ❖ Homelessness
- ❖ Employed with or without benefits
- ❖ Business firms (start up and failure rates)
- ❖ Economic diversity
- ❖ Percent of workforce employed in technology firms
- ❖ Percent of renters paying more than 30% of their income for rent
- ❖ Unemployment rate in city, county, state, and nationally
- ❖ Building permits, residential and commercial
- ❖ Venture capital invested
- ❖ Federal poverty level by demographics
- ❖ Recipients of public assistance, TANF, length of time
- ❖ Employment by sector
- ❖ Underemployment
- ❖ Earnings by industry
- ❖ Total taxable value of real property by county and cities
- ❖ Science and technology degrees granted, by regional higher education

Education

- ❖ Higher education enrollment rate for adults ages 18 to 29, ratio of population to enrollment
- ❖ Highly qualified teachers (teachers who have advanced degrees in the subject they teach by level)
- ❖ Graduation rates, public and private
- ❖ Percent of high school graduates pursuing additional education or training, number of students in applied technical programs
- ❖ WASL scores by grade and demographics
- ❖ Residents' perceptions of public school quality
- ❖ Ratio of students to guidance counselors by level, achievement levels, outcomes
- ❖ Educational attainment
- ❖ Adult education enrollment
- ❖ Total participation in continuing education
- ❖ Students who qualify for free and reduced price lunch by grade
- ❖ Higher education degrees and certificates
- ❖ Spending per pupil, public and private by level
- ❖ Relationship between programs offered and jobs available
- ❖ Rate of college graduation (five year rate)
- ❖ Public school students enrolled in college or skills training, math taken last 2 years
- ❖ Number of GED's, trend
- ❖ Literacy rate
- ❖ Head Start eligible vs. enrollment, ECEAP eligible vs. enrollment
- ❖ Levy/bond support

Environment and Natural Resources

- ❖ Number of days per year with an exceedence of Federal Air Quality
- ❖ Housing density
- ❖ Population and diversity of key native wildlife species
- ❖ Drinking water quality/what kinds of additives
- ❖ Percent of energy produced by renewable sources
- ❖ Land use categories by acreage
- ❖ Change in depth of the aquifer over time
- ❖ Energy use per capita
- ❖ Acres of protected and restored urban wilds and natural open areas
- ❖ Tons of solid waste water per person per day
- ❖ Water quality of the Spokane River
- ❖ Commute times
- ❖ Funding for parks and open space city, county
- ❖ Change in flow of Spokane River and other surface water bodies
- ❖ Percentage of city surfaces covered by tree canopy
- ❖ Wetlands, number of acres
- ❖ Percent of solid human waste recycled
- ❖ Per capita greenhouse gas or CO2 emissions from residential & commercial energy use, transportation, and solid waste disposal
- ❖ Green construction
- ❖ Percentage of residences within a half mile of designated open space
- ❖ Acres of sustainable agriculture, mining and forestry land

Table 4. Continued**Health**

- ❖ Key chronic diseases by demographics
- ❖ Funding for health care
- ❖ Trends in city, state, and federal public health funding levels
- ❖ Mothers receiving adequate prenatal care (in the first trimester)
- ❖ Percent of population uninsured
- ❖ Deaths by leading causes
- ❖ Mental health clinics, health care clinics and hospitals
- ❖ Percent of births to women on Medicaid
- ❖ Hospitalizations by leading causes
- ❖ Number of ER visits that could have been avoided by primary care
- ❖ Percent of charity care/bad debt
- ❖ Disparities - What drives them?
- ❖ Length of time since last routine checkup
- ❖ Rates and health impact of domestic violence/intimate partner violence
- ❖ SF12
- ❖ Nutrition
- ❖ Pregnancy outcomes (abortions, preterm, low birth weight)
- ❖ Access to medications - affordable
- ❖ Loss of function
- ❖ Physical activity
- ❖ Adults who engage in healthy behaviors
- ❖ Zoonotic and vector-borne diseases
- ❖ Research
- ❖ Location of children and recreation areas vs. exposure to environmental hazards
- ❖ Pregnancy rates
- ❖ Infant mortality by demographics

Housing and Transportation

- ❖ Level of service for alternative modes
- ❖ Frequency of public transit service
- ❖ Housing costs as a percentage of personal per capita income
- ❖ Homeownership rates
- ❖ Perception of housing affordability
- ❖ Housing stock by type (rental, condo, vacant)
- ❖ Percent of residential properties that are vacant
- ❖ Public funding for STA
- ❖ Average time of commute
- ❖ Access to mortgages by race or protected class
- ❖ Housing affordability index (compared statewide)
- ❖ Bank and private funding availability for residences in mixed-use bldg.
- ❖ Ratio of miles of quality bike/pedestrian paths to total lane miles of roads
- ❖ Perception of safety on streets
- ❖ Rental vacancy rate in Spokane County
- ❖ Homeless (children under 18, independent youth under 18 and adults)
- ❖ Perception of neighborhood aesthetic value
- ❖ Federal funding for housing
- ❖ Dollars spent for road miles per capita
- ❖ Average length of commute to work
- ❖ Sidewalk accessibility (tree roots, snow)

Public Safety

- ❖ Victimization rate
- ❖ Number of individuals successfully rehabilitated (drug, incarceration, etc.)
- ❖ Local jurisdiction funding: per capita city funding for public safety
- ❖ Levels of citizen interest in crime prevention
- ❖ Volunteerism/civic engagement
- ❖ Number of incarcerated due to mental illness
- ❖ After-school programs for youth (capacity vs. population)
- ❖ Percent of employers making their workplace safer (policies, procedures)
- ❖ Violent crimes in public places
- ❖ Community capacity to create system change (e.g., percentage of incarcerations related to mental illness)
- ❖ Incidence of reported family violence (domestic and child)
- ❖ Recidivism rates on incarceration and substance abuse treatment
- ❖ Youth education on dating violence/date rape
- ❖ Gun-related injuries/deaths
- ❖ Use of communication networks for safety (INHS, SD81, Comcast)
- ❖ Local jurisdiction funding: per capita county funding for public safety
- ❖ Number of presentations given on safety (public awareness)
- ❖ School suspension/expulsion rates, public schools by level per 1,000 students
- ❖ Violent deaths per 10,000 youth
- ❖ Neighborhood cohesion

Website

Focus group participants also provided information about what they would like from a community indicators website. An important guideline expressed by the participants was a non-biased presentation of the data.

Functional issues included:

- ❖ Presenting layers of data that progressively become more detailed
- ❖ Allowing queries of the data
- ❖ Providing mapping capabilities with the ability to overlay data
- ❖ Making data downloadable
- ❖ Including a comments section to provide feedback
- ❖ Enabling users to receive additional information

Data presentation issues included having:

- ❖ Clear wording and definitions
- ❖ Appropriate links to additional information and resources
- ❖ Printable fact sheets
- ❖ Trends over time
- ❖ Benchmark comparisons

Next Steps

The CII working group now faces several immediate tasks to implement our goal of producing an on-line source of socioeconomic data for the Inland Northwest. The first set of these tasks will easily stretch over several months. They are listed below in sequential order:

1. From secondary data sources, research the availability of the indicators for Spokane County suggested by the focus groups. Document the ease of data availability, frequency of publication and length of time series readily available.
2. Consider various geographic boundaries, if data are available.
3. Filter the indicators against the guidelines developed by the committee.
4. Alert focus group participants about the results of this data inventory. For those suggested variables without a known data source, pose the question whether interested community groups or government entities would like to fund the start of creation of a series via original research or surveys.
5. On the basis of the response to these findings, adjust the list of suggested indicators, or their definitions, for the first iteration of the CII database.
6. Develop a query-based, user-friendly on-line database, as the core of the first iteration of the CII web site. Provide ample links and credits to participating data-gathering organizations. Also provide brief, neutral description of the data.
7. Go live with the website.
8. Publicize the presence of the web site and solicit feedback to the initial version, specifically from the focus group participants and generally from all users.



The steps listed are those that the CII working group expects to finish within the next few months. Thereafter, it is our hope that effort can be both deepened and expanded. The CII indicators can be deepened by providing data for units smaller than county or city, perhaps at the census block level, within Spokane County. A Geographical Information System (GIS) approach will be integral to any deepening of the data.

Expansion will entail the replication of the Spokane CII process to a small number of other Inland Northwest counties. How these counties might be chosen remains to be determined. Deepening and expansion are not mutually exclusive activities. However, resources may constrain the CII working group to focus initially on one of the two. We invite feedback about how we might best proceed to offer the benefits of democratized data beyond this first iteration.



Summary

The Community Indicators Initiative (CII) in Spokane County is a civic initiative formed under the leadership of Patrick Jones, Director of Eastern Washington University's Institute for Public Policy and Economic Analysis in partnership with the following local and regional organizations: Eastern Washington University, Spokane Regional Health District, City of Spokane, Spokane County United Way, Community-Minded Enterprises (formerly Health Improvement Partnership), The Lands Council, and New Priorities Foundation.

The purpose of the initiative is to create an indicator system that supports efforts contributing toward a healthy, vibrant community by fostering informed dialog and by tracking progress on shared goals. Across the country, indicators have become a popular tool for tracking trends and measuring outcomes. "Democratization of data" is the core concept at the heart of indicator projects. Once data have been gathered on specific indicators they will be made available to the public through a website. This new resource will also provide analysis and reports on indicators of interest to the community. The website will:

- ❖ Make data easily accessible to help inform regional policy makers as they face difficult decisions.
- ❖ Provide aggregate data from a variety of sources into a one-stop-shop for grant writers or others who wish to address a variety of community concerns.
- ❖ Educate interested citizens on various issues through a user-friendly website interface.
- ❖ Give community groups a better sense of where we have been and where we are headed by measuring indicators over time.
- ❖ Support the creation of uniform regional standards for data collection, maintenance, and management.
- ❖ Provide a holistic picture of the Spokane community to engage in a new type of community dialog among government and other influential groups, business sectors, community and grass-roots organizations and individuals.
- ❖ Identify priority needs and opportunity areas to catalyze effective responses across the community.



The local Community Indicator Initiative process has been informed by the contributions of over 150 participants and experts through a series of focus groups providing ideas for indicators in the following categories:

- ❖ Arts, culture, and leisure
- ❖ Economic vitality
- ❖ Education
- ❖ Environment and natural resources
- ❖ Health
- ❖ Housing and transportation
- ❖ Public safety
- ❖ Social capital

Focus group participants identified the indicators they felt were the most useful in portraying a healthy, vibrant community. Data sources for the top 20 indicators for each category are currently being researched to determine data availability in terms of geographic level, frequency and local relevance. The final outcome of the planning process is to provide a broad set of indicators that describe key characteristics of Spokane County, housed on a user-friendly website accessible to an individual or group wishing to use information. The website will initially start with approximately 150 indicators. As funding and time allows, additional data will be added to the site, sources of data will be clearly identified, resources will be secured for the continued maintenance of the site, and ongoing communication of progress and opportunities for continual involvement from community members will be encouraged.

It is a capital mistake to theorize before one has data. Insensibly one begins to twist facts to suit theories, instead of theories to suit facts.

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle
British mystery author & physician (1859 - 1930)



Acknowledgments

Members of Community Indicators Initiative working group:

Jerrie Allard

Spokane County United Way
jerriea@unitedwayspokane.org

Lisa Capoccia

Community-Minded Enterprises
(formerly Health Improvement Partnership)
lisac@community-minded.org

Susanne Croft

City of Spokane
scroft@spokanecity.org

Patty Gates

New Priorities Foundation
patty@newpriorities.org

Patrick Jones

Eastern Washington University
Institute for Public Policy & Economic Analysis
dpjones@mail.ewu.edu

Amy Riffe

Spokane Regional Health District
ariffe@spokanecounty.org

Lyndia Vold

Spokane Regional Health District
lvold@spokanecounty.org

Amber Waldref

The Lands Council
awaldref@landscouncil.org

Contact Information

D. Patrick Jones, Ph.D.

Institute for Public Policy & Economic Analysis
Eastern Washington University
668 N. Riverpoint Boulevard, Suite A
Spokane, WA 99202-1660
(509)358-2266
dpjones@mail.ewu.edu

For electronic or hard copies of this report:

Contact Sherry Smith, Graphic Specialist
Spokane Regional Health District
at (509)323-2853 or
assessmentcenter@spokanecounty.org



Appendix A: Focus Group Participant Organizations

Art, Culture & Leisure

Allegro, Baroque & Beyond
Friends of the Falls
Mountain Gear Inc.
Museum of Arts and Culture
Rainbow Regional Community Center
Spokane Chamber of Commerce, Convention & Visitors Bureau
Spokane Regional Sports Commission
The Shop
Vision Marketing
West Coast Entertainment

Economic Vitality

African-American, Hispanic, Asian, Native American (AHANA)
Associated General Contractors (AGC)
Avista Corporation
City of Spokane
City of Spokane Valley
Journal of Business
Spokane County
Spokane Neighborhood Action Programs (SNAP)
Spokane Regional Chamber of Commerce
Spokane Teachers Credit Union
Spokane Valley Chamber of Commerce
VOICES for Opportunity, Income, Child Care, Education and Support
Washington Trust Bank
Wells & Company

Education

Catholic Diocese of Spokane
Central Valley School District
Eastern Washington University, Office of the President
ESD 101
Freeman School District
Spokane Falls Community College
United Way Success by 6
Washington State University, Office of the President
West Valley High School
West Valley High School, Parents

Environment & Natural Resources

Avista Corporation
Boise Cascade
Eastern Washington University, Dept. of Urban & Regional Planning
Independent River Consultant
Inland Northwest Land Trust
Inland Northwest Resource Council
Neighborhood Alliance of Spokane
Northwest Mining Association
Spokane County
Spokane County Conservation District
Spokane Regional Health District, Environmental Health Department
Spokane Tribe of Indians
The Lands Council
The Sierra Club
Urban Forest Council
Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
Washington State Department of Ecology

Health

Aging & Long Term Care of Eastern Washington
Community Health Association of Spokane (CHAS) Medical Clinics
Deaconess Medical Center
Inland Imaging
Planned Parenthood of the Inland Northwest
Sacred Heart Medical Services
Safe Start Program-Washington State University
Second Harvest of the Inland Northwest
Spokane AIDS Network
Spokane Regional Health District
St. Luke's Rehabilitation Center
Transitions Women's Health
West Central Community Center

Housing & Transportation

African-American, Hispanic, Asian, Native American (AHANA)
City of Spokane
City of Spokane, Department of Community Development
Common Ground
Community Frameworks (formerly Northwest Regional Facilitators)
Eastern Washington University, Dept. of Urban & Regional Planning
Independent Consultant
Northwest Fair Housing Alliance
Spokane Association of Realtors
Spokane County Boundary Review Board
Spokane Housing Authority
Spokane International Airport
Spokane Low Income Housing Consortium
Spokane Transportation Authority
Washington State University, Department of Real Estate

Public Safety

Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS)
Domestic Violence Consortium
Gonzaga University
Spokane County Emergency Management Services (EMS)
Spokane County Juvenile Justice
Spokane County Prosecuting Attorney's Office
Spokane County Public Defender
Spokane Police Department
Spokane YWCA
Washington State Public Liaison
Washington State University

Social Capital

City of Airway Heights
City of Cheney
City of Deer Park
City of Liberty Lake
City of Spokane
City of Spokane Valley
Haught Strategies
Community-Minded Enterprises (formerly Health Improvement Partnership)
Interfaith Council
Congresswoman Cathy McMorris
Office of U.S. Senator Patty Murray
Office of U.S. Senator Lisa Brown
The Spokesman-Review
United Way of Spokane County
Washington State Representative, 3rd District
Washington State Representative, 6th District
Washington State University, Department of Political Science

Appendix B: Focus Group Voting Results

Arts, Culture, and Leisure

Votes Diversity

- 3 Cultural events by racial and ethnic communities
- 2 Extent American Indian traditions are promoted and celebrated locally
- 0 Number of cultural/ethnic celebrations (e.g., Pow-Wows)
- 0 Percent of residents from diverse backgrounds

Arts & Culture

- 10 Designated city/county funding for the arts
- 9 Amount of time people can spend on leisure/arts/culture (discretionary time)
- 8 Attendance at art and cultural events per 1,000 people
- 7 Private support per person for the arts
- 6 Facilities' available seats-to-population ratio for sports events/size of venues
- 5 Museum attendance per 1,000 people (by museum, within Spokane County)
- 5 Per capita attendance at sporting events per 1,000 people
- 4 Number of arts-related businesses
- 4 Number of county and city festivals and celebrations annually
- 4 Attendance at musical shows per 1,000 people
- 2 Number of full-time equivalent teachers assigned to instruct visual arts, music and theatre in public schools
- 1 Number of volunteers in the performing arts
- 1 Designated federal funding for the arts
- 1 Facilities' available seats-to-population ratio for performing arts/size of venues
- 1 Free and reduced price tickets at cultural institutions and venues
- 1 Ratio of after-school program availability to student population
- 0 Number of jobs located in the "Creative Cluster" industries
- 0 Number of volunteers in sports organizations
- 0 Artist compensation/pay
- 0 Book store sales (by units and by dollars)
- 0 Children and youth participation in after-school arts programs
- 0 Distribution of arts/cultural facilities in relation to children, youth & seniors
- 0 Gross number/dollar amount of arts sales
- 0 Hits on community cultural websites
- 0 Library cards per 1,000 people/circulation per person
- 0 Non-profit arts organizations per capita in Spokane County
- 0 Percent or number of large-scale entertainment acts coming to Spokane
- 0 Students enrolled in degree granting schools of visual/performing arts
- 0 Tenure of paid staff in arts organizations

Votes Leisure

- 10 Participation in team or individual sports/recreation
- 10 Proximity to natural recreation opportunities
- 9 Funding for public parks (by municipality: city, county, state)
- 7 Visitor expenditures (visitors to local events or attractions); impact on tax base; jobs created
- 6 Number of miles of bike trails & quality (local/regional; gravel, graded, paved)
- 5 Number of people traveling to Spokane (visitors) for local events or attractions (to attend, participate in, etc.)
- 5 Acreage of golf-courses per 1,000 people/rounds of golf & price (cost)
- 4 Non-automotive travel
- 4 Recreation expenditures per person for activities & maintenance
- 3 Number of ski mountains/cost index
- 3 Acreage of parks per 1,000 people
- 2 Percentage of public land available & distance (BLM, Forest Service, etc.)
- 2 Acres in recreational open space per 1,000 people
- 2 Average pay for recreation/leisure jobs
- 2 Cost comparative index
- 2 Miles of trails per 1,000 people
- 2 Percentage of population that can access arts/culture/leisure events/activities
- 2 Weather (ski days, clear days, etc.)
- 1 Acreage of lakes
- 1 Acres of conservation land intended for public use per 1,000 people
- 1 Proximity to events by type & location
- 1 River-flow by date/time of year/event
- 1 Spectators of team/individual recreation or sports events
- 0 Number of all-age participants in community sporting events
- 0 Number of people using recreation facilities each month
- 0 Access to & public use of the Centennial Trail per 1,000 residents
- 0 Access to gaming
- 0 Access to/number of wineries
- 0 Community centers per 1,000 people
- 0 Public access sites on lakes & rivers

Appendix B: Focus Group Voting Results

Economic Vitality

Votes Income & Wages

10	Average annual wage by sector
5	Income inequality
5	Median family income; absolute level & rate of growth
4	Median household income; absolute level & rate of growth for Spokane, County, State & nationally
4	Per capita income; absolute level & rate of growth
4	Percent of median income needed for basic needs
4	Median wage levels by select occupations
2	Family income distribution
2	Comparative household, family & per capita income
2	Income by race & educational attainment
2	Income "available" per person
1	Household income distribution

Employment

9	Employed with or without benefits
7	Unemployment rate in city, county, state & nationally
6	Employment by sector
6	Underemployment
4	Net employment growth
4	Job training & adult education
3	Percent of population that is not in the labor force
2	Unemployment by race
2	Multi-employment
1	Job placement for individuals with disabilities
0	Percent of the population that is employed
0	Unemployment benefit claims in dollars
0	Optimal full employment

Healthy Growth

10	New housing starts or total new home sales
7	Building permits, residential & commercial
5	Purchase of new or first homes
4	Drivers license surrenders in Spokane County & state
4	Airport statistics
4	Buying power
4	Individual debt load
3	Consumer confidence
2	Number of convention delegates
1	Tourist spending
1	Trash pick up
0	Room tax revenue
0	Residential electrical customers

Votes Economic Equity

10	Cost of living
9	Homelessness
7	Percent of renters paying more than 30% of their income for rent
6	Federal poverty level by demographics
6	Recipients of public assistance, TANF, length of time
2	Food stamps by demographics
1	Emergency food assistance by individual (food bank)
0	Free lunch program participation

Economic Strength

9	Business firms (start up & failure rates)
8	Economic diversity
6	Earnings by industry
6	Total taxable value of real property by county & cities
3	Percent of commercial properties that are vacant
3	Total county income per capita
3	Total deposits per capita in community banks, S&L's & credit unions
2	Commercial occupancy rates by area & type
2	Bankruptcies
1	Spokane County & cities' taxable retail sales
0	Average age of local businesses
0	Number of business firms by NAICS sector
0	Foreclosures on deeds of trust
0	Growth of corporate tax on profits
0	Downtown business by sector
0	Dollars invested in downtown restoration & new development
0	Taxable contracting sales

Maintaining Region's Technological Edge

11	Technology jobs per 1,000 population
8	Percent of workforce employed in technology firms
7	Venture capital invested
6	Science & technology degrees granted, by regional higher education
5	In-home access to computers & the internet
2	Technology firm birthrates all establishments
2	Online population
1	Patents per 1,000 population
1	SBIR awards per 1,000 population
1	Value of federal R&D grants per capita
1	Regional university patent applications filed
1	Number of students per computer in County schools
0	ISP access points
0	Regional university invention disclosures
0	Regional university licenses executed
0	Regional university license income received
0	Commercial internet domain names
0	Availability & use of technology in non-profits

Appendix B: Focus Group Voting Results

Education

Votes Students, General

- 6 Educational attainment
- 6 Ratio of students to guidance counselors by level, achievement levels, outcomes
- 5 Students who qualify for free & reduced price lunch by grade
- 4 Literacy rate
- 3 Student mobility
- 1 Percent of students utilizing special education programs by level
- 1 Public school attendance rate by level
- 1 Student homelessness
- 0 Public school enrollment by level
- 0 Private school enrollment by level
- 0 Percent of students absent 20 days or more out of school year by level, students referred to Becca Bill
- 0 Public school expulsion rates by level
- 0 Attendance at libraries & museums
- 0 Home schooling student count by school district area
- 0 ESL in home
- 0 Transition

Pre-K

- 4 Head Start eligible vs. enrollment, ECEAP eligible vs. enrollment
- 3 Use of child care, licensed/unlicensed
- 3 Preschool programs, Head Start to Preschool entering Kindergarten
- 2 Number of child care providers
- 2 Capacity of child care providers
- 2 One/two working parents
- 2 Number of accredited providers
- 1 Number of children on subsidized child care
- 1 Education levels of providers
- 0 Percent of child care providers accepting subsidized clients
- 0 Average cost of child care by age of child
- 0 Number students in centers vs. licensed homes
- 0 Percent of income for child care
- 0 Parents who read to their child

Higher Education

- 9 Higher education enrollment rate for adults ages 18 to 29, ratio of population to enrollment
- 5 Higher education degrees & certificates
- 4 Rate of college graduation (five year rate)
- 3 High school graduates needing remediation in community colleges or state universities
- 3 Percent of post-secondary graduates finding employment in their fields
- 2 Tuition net costs as a percent of median disposable income
- 1 Ratings of local colleges & universities
- 1 Science/engineering graduates, enrollment by categories
- 1 Analysis of 1st generation higher education attendees
- 1 Number of high school graduates unable to enter higher education
- 0 State funding for higher education
- 0 Expenditures for Higher Education as a percent of GSP
- 0 Participation in public higher education institutions by race & ethnicity
- 0 Number of student parents
- 0 Working while in school
- 0 On site child care for high school students children

K - 8

- 6 WASL scores by grade & demographics
- 0 Public school 1st grade promotions
- 0 After school programs for boys & girls vs. need
- 0 Alternative program enrollment

Votes Schools, General

- 8 Highly qualified teachers (teachers who have advanced degrees in the subject they teach, by level
- 6 Residents' perceptions of public school quality
- 4 Spending per pupil, public & private, by level
- 4 Levy/bond support
- 2 Percent of hiring from local job pool, teacher turnover rates, number of applications
- 2 Number of weapons/drug use incidents reported
- 1 Schools with up-to-date technology & libraries, gyms, labs & schoolyards by district
- 1 Ethnic diversity of teaching staff
- 1 Parent participation in schools, by level
- 0 Residents' perceptions of public school safety
- 0 Teacher to student ratio public & private, by level
- 0 Average years of teacher experience by level
- 0 Average public school teacher salary
- 0 Number of FTE certified teachers, National Board for Professional Teaching Standards Certifications
- 0 Grant money per capita (economic development connection), are schools competitive for funding?
- 0 Number of schools needing improvement as recorded by state
- 0 Strong leadership

High School

- 8 Graduation rates, public & private
- 7 Percent of high school graduates pursuing additional education or training, number of students in applied technical programs
- 4 Public school students enrolled in college or skills training, math taken last 2 years
- 3 Alternative program opportunity
- 2 WASL scores for 10th graders by demographics
- 2 Number of students participating in extracurricular activities
- 1 SAT scores by school district
- 1 High school dropout education outcomes
- 1 Correlation of completion of WASL & graduation, higher education
- 1 Participation in Running Start by demographics
- 0 Number of exceptional ed students completing high school, ratings by schools, student outcomes
- 0 GED rate
- 0 High school dropout employment outcomes
- 0 Number of students in job prep programs
- 0 Number of student parents
- 0 Working while in school
- 0 On site childcare for high school students children

Adult Education & Training

- 6 Adult education enrollment
- 5 Total participation in continuing education
- 4 Number of GED's, trend
- 4 Relationship between programs offered & jobs available
- 1 Adult ed. & Eng. language slots vs. length of time on wait list
- 0 Technical school graduates employed in field
- 0 Number of residents in job training programs

Appendix B: Focus Group Voting Results

Environmental Indicators

Votes Air Quality

12	Number of days per year with an exceedence of Federal Air Quality
5	Per capita greenhouse gas or CO2 emissions from residential & commercial energy use, transportation, & solid waste disposal
3	Number of days per year the Air Quality Index is in the good range
3	Toxic emissions from smokestacks & tailpipes
2	Days of attainment of National Air Quality standards
1	Number of reported asthma cases
1	Emissions of criteria pollutants
1	Emissions of carbon dioxide & greenhouse gases
1	Number of days with temperatures above 90 degrees
0	Ozone air pollution
0	Toxic Air Contaminant (TOC) releases

Green Living

5	Green construction
3	Alternative fuel vehicles sold
2	Organic farms
1	Community gardens
1	Noise/light pollution
1	Food Alliance criteria for sustainable farms
1	Emissions of criteria pollutants
1	Number of acres in Conservation Reserve program

Green Infrastructure

10	Population & diversity of key native wildlife species
9	Land use categories by acreage
8	Acres of protected & restored urban wilds & natural open areas
7	Funding for parks & open space city, county
6	Percentage of city surfaces covered by tree canopy
6	Wetlands, number of acres
4	Green space acres per capita
4	Population trends of keystone indicator species by each habitat
3	Corridors between protected open spaces
3	Number of acres of commercial farm land
2	Acres of commercial timberland
1	Number of trees within city limits
1	Percent of city surfaces covered by pavement
1	Noxious weeds
1	Annual departure from long range temperature mean
1	Number & volume of bird species
0	Access to green space
0	Volume of timber harvested
0	Friends groups for parks & green space
0	Private forest land

Recreation

3	Miles of trails & bicycle paths/lanes
3	Miles of accessible streams & lakes
2	Acres of parks

Votes Energy Use

9	Percent of energy produced by renewable sources
8	Energy use per capita
7	Commute times
2	Annual gasoline consumption per person
0	GSP per unit of energy consumption

Ground Pollutants

1	Number of leaking underground storage tanks
1	Number of leaking underground storage tanks over 15 years old
1	Amount pesticides used
0	New septic tank permits issued

Smart Growth

12	Housing density
5	Percentage of residences within a half mile of designated open space
5	Acres of sustainable agriculture, mining & forestry land
3	Protection of private property rights
3	Sustainable development
2	Percentage of residences within a half mile of a food market
1	Road density

Waste Management

8	Tons of solid waste water per person per day
6	Percent of solid human waste recycled
4	Wastewater generation
3	Household recycling rates
2	Residential household hazardous waste
0	Total solid waste generation
0	GSP per amount of hazardous waste

Water Quality

10	Drinking water quality/what kinds of additives
9	Change in depth of the aquifer over time
8	Water quality of the Spokane River
7	Change in flow of Spokane River & other surface water bodies
3	Permitting of aquifer access
2	Water consumption daily per capita use in gallons in cities
2	Percent of runoff not captured by storm drainage systems
1	Existence of water conservation plans
0	Quantity of pollutants discharged into Spokane River
0	Number of violations of water quality standards
0	Percent of motorized wells with L1 ppb atrazine
0	Percent of motorized wells with L3 ppm nitrate
0	Storm water overflow

Appendix B: Focus Group Voting Results

Health Indicators

Votes Access to Care

8	Percentage of population uninsured
7	Mental health clinics, health care clinics & hospitals
6	Disparities - What drives them?
4	Access to medications - affordable
3	Use of emergency room
3	Health care expenses (out-of-pocket) as a percentage of annual income
3	Access to dental care
2	Households unable to obtain/difficulty or delay obtaining perceived needed health care
2	Insurance carriers
1	Potentially avoidable hospitalizations
1	Distance to receive medical care
1	Capacity (number of physicians)
1	Access to basic/primary care
0	Primary care provider to population ratio
0	Physicians accepting new patients
0	Dental care provider to population ratio
0	Putting off health care due to expense
0	Estimated need for substance abuse treatment by demographics
0	Number of people served by drug treatment plans
0	Language interpreters at major hospitals & health centers
0	People receiving home-delivered meals
0	Mental health care
0	Use of ER for dental care
0	Number of missed appointments
0	Access to specialty care
0	Reimbursement rates
0	Underinsured

Diseases

4	Zoonotic & vector-borne diseases
2	HIV by demographics
1	Communicable disease prevalence
1	Cancer rate by type
1	Rates of STD's
0	Food & waterborne diseases
0	People with vaccine-preventable diseases
0	HIV/AIDS-related deaths per 100,000 people

Environmental Health

4	Location of children & recreation areas vs. exposure to environmental hazards
0	Average monthly reported incidents of illegal dumping
0	Average monthly reported incidents of dirty streets & alleys
0	Average number of reported incidents of clogged storm drains
0	Average monthly reported incidents of abandoned vehicles
0	Average monthly reported incidents of rats

Hospitalizations

7	Hospitalizations by leading causes
7	Number of ER visits that could have been avoided by primary care
7	Percentage of charity care/bad debt
2	Hospitalization rates by demographics
0	Ratio of hospital beds to population

Votes Health Status

11	Key chronic diseases by demographics
5	SF12
4	Loss of function
3	Food insecurity
3	Mental health status
3	Overall health as fair or poor
2	Obesity by demographics
2	Health screening
1	Disabled
1	Elder care - supports for elderly
0	Life expectancy
0	Children with special health care needs
0	Children with asthma
0	Youth who report strong relationships with parent/adult mentor
0	Nursing-home patient days per people over 65
0	Diabetes - youth & adults
0	COPD

Health Behaviors

6	Length of time since last routine checkup
6	Rates & health impact of domestic violence/intimate partner violence
5	Nutrition
4	Physical activity
4	Adults who engage in healthy behaviors
3	Children receiving scheduled immunizations
2	Illicit drug use/abuse
2	Adults who engage in risky behaviors
1	Alcohol use
1	Adolescents who engage in risky behaviors
0	Tobacco use
0	Length of time since last dental visit
0	Packs of cigarettes sold per person

Funding

11	Funding for health care
10	Trends in city, state, & federal public health funding levels
4	Research

Maternal & Infant Health

10	Mothers receiving adequate prenatal care (in the first trimester)
7	Percentage of births to women on Medicaid
5	Pregnancy outcomes (abortions, preterm, low birth weight)
4	Pregnancy rates
2	Birth weight by demographics
1	Birth rates
1	Births by maternal education level

Mortality

8	Deaths by leading causes
4	Infant mortality by demographics
2	Mortality rates by demographics
1	Drug related deaths
1	Violence related deaths
0	Suicide rates by demographics

Appendix B: Focus Group Voting Results

Housing and Transportation

Votes Affordable Housing

9	Housing costs as a percentage of personal per capita income
8	Homeownership rates
7	Perception of housing affordability
3	Households that pay more than 30% of income for housing
2	Households receiving energy assistance as a percent of all households
1	Affordable housing for special needs groups
1	Median sales price, single-family homes & condos
0	Rental costs as a percentage of personal per capita income
0	Median advertised two-bedroom rental rate
0	Percentage of housing units that are total public & subsidized housing

Adequate Housing Supply

5	Rental vacancy rate in Spokane County
3	Market rate & subsidized housing production
3	Perception of housing supply
2	Growth in households compared to housing units

Access to Housing

6	Access to mortgages by race or protected class
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Homelessness Prevention

5	Homeless (children under 18, independent youth under 18 & adults)
2	Homelessness by demographics

Residential Density

4	Number of downtown residents as a percent of total population
0	Residential trends in urban/incorporated vs. rural/unincorporated areas

Housing Market

6	Housing affordability index (compared statewide)
2	Median number of days a house stays on the market
2	Affordable housing index for first-time homebuyers
1	Repeat sales housing price index by neighborhood
0	Total housing units sold
0	Rental/purchase costs per square ft.

Housing Stock

7	Housing stock by type (rental, condo, vacant)
2	Total housing stock
1	Designated historic buildings

Public Transportation

10	Frequency of public transit service
4	Average weekday bus ridership per 1,000 people
3	Availability of service information at stops
1	Percentage of the population using public transit
0	Public transportation trip miles
0	Annual per capita miles of transit service
0	Perception of public transit system

Air Transportation

4	Global & national transportation capacity
4	Origin/destination of travelers
3	Total passengers flying in or out of Spokane International Airport

Votes Healthy Homes & Neighborhoods

7	Percentage of residential properties that are vacant
5	Perception of neighborhood aesthetic value
4	Property foreclosures on deeds of trust
2	Reported cases of lead poisoning
2	Percentage of residential properties with other types of violations
2	Neighborhood identity
1	Abandoned properties

Funding for Housing

6	Bank & private funding availability for residences in mixed-use bldg.
5	Federal funding for housing
2	Percentage of residential property where rehab investment > \$5000 took place
0	State funding for housing

Funding for Transportation

7	Public funding for STA
5	Dollars spent for road miles per capita
4	Dollars spent per vehicle mile traveled for public transit
4	Unfunded backlog of road projects
2	State funding for roads
1	Federal funding for all transportation types
0	County funding for roads
0	City funding for roads
0	Local & user-fee funding

Alternative Modes of Transportation

10	Level of service for alternative modes
6	Ratio of miles of quality bike/pedestrian paths to total lane miles of roads
3	Sales of clean-fuel vehicles
1	Number & percent of people biking to work
1	Number & percent of people walking to work

Commuting Patterns

7	Average time of commute
5	Average length of commute to work
3	Rails, air, freight mobility
3	Time waiting at intersections (vehicular & pedestrian)
3	Distribution of daily trips
2	Annual vehicle miles traveled per person
0	Traffic volume
0	Car ownership per capita
0	Primary mode of transportation

Healthy Transportation

6	Perception of safety on streets
5	Sidewalk accessibility (tree roots, snow)
3	Safety on streets
1	Incidence of traffic accidents (cars & pedestrians)

Appendix B: Focus Group Voting Results

Public Safety Indicators

Votes Crime Rates/Prevention

8	Victimization rate
8	Number of individuals successfully rehabilitated (drug, incarceration, etc.)
7	Levels of citizen interest in crime prevention
6	Number of incarcerated due to mental illness
5	Violent crimes in public places
3	People who report being victims of crime
3	Alcohol related crime
2	Number of crimes on public transit
2	Property crime rate
2	Reported county-wide hate crimes by type
2	Methamphetamine related crime
1	Alcohol related fatalities
1	Drug-related crime rate
1	Percentage of arrests for prostitution
1	Percentage of 911 calls for drug activity
1	Number of sexual offenders, all levels
1	Rates of arrest & incarceration
0	Violent crime rate
0	Intentional injury rate
0	Percentage of neighborhoods involved in "block watch"
0	Percentage of people with decreased use of parks, public spaces

Accidents/Safety Issues Not Related to Crime

7	Volunteerism/civic engagement
6	Percentage of employers making their workplace safer (policies, procedures)
5	Gun-related injuries/deaths
5	Use of communication networks for safety (INHS, SD81, Comcast)
4	Neighborhood cohesion
3	Number of residents trained in CPR, emergency response
3	Public involvement in safety
1	Accidents
1	Public access to public spaces
1	Percentage of employees involved in safety prevention (e.g., CPR-trained employees)
1	Number of emergency preparedness initiatives in community
0	Number of individuals attending bicycle safety classes
0	Pedestrian/cyclist safety
0	Mortality/morbidity
0	Access to helmets/car seats for low-income

Efficient Emergency Response System

8	Local jurisdiction funding: per capita city funding for public safety
5	Local jurisdiction funding: per capita county funding for public safety
2	Average law enforcement response time
2	Average fire response time
1	Number/types of calls to First Call for Help
1	Public access to defibrillators
0	Federal funding for public safety per capita
0	State funding for public safety per capita

Votes Public Safety Perceptions & Readily Available Data

4	Number of presentations given on safety (public awareness)
3	Respect & trust between residents & police officers
3	Public perceptions of threats to community
3	Number of officers involved in safety programs (in schools, on the streets, etc.)
2	Residents who trust their neighbors
2	Number of pedestrians in the neighborhood
1	Perception of violent crime
0	Number of officers per capita

System Change

5	Community capacity to create system change (e.g., percentage of incarcerations related to mental illness)
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Family & Social Networks

5	Incidence of reported family violence (domestic & child)
5	Recidivism rates on incarceration & substance abuse treatment
3	Impact of methamphetamine on community & social networks
3	Elder abuse investigations (institutional & domestic)
3	Adult education
2	Neighbors/friends watching each others' backs
2	Foster children per 10,000 children
2	Licensed child care (percentage of accessible, & during non-school hours)
1	CPS-accepted referral rates per capita
1	Family structure (percentage of married, etc.)
1	Median length of stay in foster care
0	Divorces as a percent of marriages

Youth

6	After-school programs for youth (capacity vs. population)
5	Youth education on dating violence/date rape
4	School suspension/expulsion rates, public school by level per 1,000 students
4	Violent deaths per 10,000 youth
3	School turnover rates in County
2	Percentage of juvenile arrests with at least one prior offense
1	Juvenile arrests by offense
1	Juvenile offenses & detention by demographics
1	Reports of gang related incidence/Parent education about gangs
0	Average daily population of juveniles in detention

Institute for Public Policy & Economic Analysis
Eastern Washington University
668 N. Riverpoint Boulevard, Suite A
Spokane, WA 99202-1660

